816 m. 15 / 53. Kent

To the Honourable, the Houſe of Commons aſſembled in Parliament.

Propoſals humbly offered for a Proviſion for the POOR, *and ſetting them to* WORK.

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Imprimis THAT this Honourable Houſe do nominate and appoint ſuch a number of Men, of known Eſtates, Integrity and Judgment in Merchandize, *&c.* either within or without the Houſe, as ſhall be thought fit to be Truſtees, as well to receive the Monies collected for the Maintainance of the Poor, as likewiſe of a full Power to ſet to Work and Imploy all Able, to correct Offenders, and in all Points to imploy ſuch Mony and Produce of the Labour, for the Good not only of thoſe able to work, but alſo for the Maintenance of the Aged, Cripples and Infants.

That the Parties, thus named, to be Truſtees, be Incorporated by the Name of *Governor and Company of Truſtees for the Poor*; Or, and to meet at and chuſe a Governor and Deputy, and Committees, and ſo Annually, for ever, after the manner of the Bank of *England*. The Committees thus choſen, and ſworn to be true to the Government and faithful in their Truſt, to prepare By-Laws to be preſented at a general Court of Truſtees within days, by the Majority to be Confirmed, Altered or Set-aſide, as ſhall appear moſt conducing to the Good of the Poor; and that ſuch By-Laws, thus made, all Juſtices of the Peace, Overſeers of the Poor, Church-Wardens, Conſtables and all Others, do obey ſo far as they do relate to the Poor, under the Penalty of for every Offence.

That all the Mony due, owing and remaining in Stock, and likewiſe all Lands, Rents, Revenues and Mony yearly ariſing, and payable to the Poor out of the ſeveral Pariſhes of this Kingdom, *&c.* become payable to the ſaid Committee of Truſtees; and, that the Overſeers of the Poor and Church-Wardens of every Pariſh, do, at or before the day of 1694. give a true Account to the ſaid Committee, under the Hands and upon Oath, of ſuch Overſeers, Church-Wardens and Miniſter of every Pariſh, before ſome neighbouring Juſtice of Peace, of ſuch Mony, Stock, Lands and Rents payable to the Uſe of the Poor, and of all Perſons as are chargeable to ſuch Pariſh: And ſhall likewiſe, at or before the ſaid day of 1694. reſpectively pay to the ſaid Committe, or to ſuch as they ſhall appoint, all ſuch Mony due and owing to the Uſe of the Poor: And that the ſaid Overſeers, *&c.* do in like manner, and on or before the ſaid day, give a true Account to the ſaid Committee, of all ſuch Sums of Mony as was aſſeſſed or payable out of their reſpective Pariſhes to the Poor this preſent Year; which ſaid Aſſeſſment to be Annually chargeable upon every ſuch reſpective Pariſh, to be collected as formerly, and paid Quarterly to the ſaid Committee, or thoſe appointd by them.

Except all Colledges, Hoſpitals and Foundations, that are (or hereafter may be) Erected and Endowed.

That it may be lawful for the ſaid Committee, or thoſe appointed by them, To provide and erect Work-houſes and Hoſpitals, for ſetting at Work and maintaining the Poor in the moſt convenient Places within this Kingdom, on the Linnen or ſome other Foreign Manufactures; or ſuch Manufactures of our own, that may not be to the Ruin of the preſent Induſtrious People of this Kingdom.

That it may be lawful for the ſaid Committee, or thoſe by them appointed, where they find either Houſes or Lands moſt proper to build ſuch Work-houſes and Hoſpitals upon, or to Endow them with, to purchaſe the ſame, and the Owners thereof be obliged to ſell and deliver the ſaid Lands or Houſes within days after notice, at Years purchaſe, according to the preſent or laſt Rents, allowing for Damage by being Uninhabited or let run to Ruin.

That after days notice given of any ſuch Lands or Tenements, ſo purchaſed, by publication in the Gazette or no former Sale, Mortgage, *&c.* ſhall have any Claim or Title, either in Law or Equity, to any part, or the whole of the Purchaſe-mony; but where, within the time limited, there doth any Diſpute ariſe, the Purchaſe-mony to remain in the Hands of the ſaid Committee, Intereſt free, until the Matter ſhall be decided between the Clamants by Law or otherwiſe

That for the better eſtabliſhing the Linnen Manufactures to the beſt Advantage to theſe Kingdoms, all ſorts of Flax and Hemp, *&c.* of the Growth of *Ireland*, be Imported, Cuſtom free, and from other Countries at a low and eaſy Cuſtom; and that ſuch additional Duties be laid on all Foreign Linnens, Silks and Papers, as may encourage thoſe Manufactures in this Kingdom.

That a Sum not exceeding *per Annum*, be allotted towards the defraying the Expences of the Perſons choſen to be of the ſaid Committee, to be paid them in proportion to their attendance at the Committee; and that it may be lawful for the ſaid Committee, to allow ſuch Salleries to their Officers, as ſhall from time to time appear reaſonable and neceſſary.

That whereas the beginning ſo great a Work will require an extraordinary Expence, the ſaid Committee have power to borrow Mony at *per Cent.* Intereſt, on the Security of the Poor's Rates.

That every Committee of Truſtees, before the Expiration of the Year they were choſen for, do cauſe a fair State of the Poor's Stock, by way of Debtor and Creditor to be prepared; and that each Perſon of the ſaid Committee do examine the ſame by their Books or ſuch other Accounts as the ſame may refer to, and put their Hands and Seals to their ſaid Books and Accounts: And likewiſe under their Hands and Seals certifie the ſaid State to be true, and a juſt Abſtract of their Books and Accounts; and do deliver the ſame to the new-elected Governour and Committees upon their Admiſſion to their Truſt; for Neglect whereof each Perſon neglecting to be puniſhable by And the Committee for the time being be accountable to every Seſſion of Parliament.

That ſo much of the Statutes made in the 39th Year of the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, the 1ſt Year of King *James* I. And the 14th Year of King *Charles* II. as concern the Apprehending Rogues, Vagabonds and ſturdy Beggars, be duly put in execution, and the Perſons apprehended be ſent to ſuch Work-houſes as the ſaid Committee ſhall appoint. And that it may be lawful for the ſaid Committee, or any or more of them to correct the Idle, Sloathful and Offenders by

Reaſons humbly offered to the Honourable the Houſe of Commons for paſſing the Propoſals for ſetting the POOR *at Work into an Act.*

Imprimis ABove all others, it is moſt reaſonable to ſuppoſe, That the Members in Parliament are the moſt competent Judges of Perſons proper for ſuch a Truſt.

II. That the Power cannot be leſs than propoſed, becauſe of the many Difficulties which unavoidably will attend ſo great a Work.

III. That the Mony ought to be paid in preſently, and a Borrowing Clauſe allow'd for as much as the firſt Years Expence will abundantly exceed any ſucceeding Years, Materials being to be bought, the Expence in fixing their Abode, and the ſmall Earnings they will make of any Work at the beginning.

IV. That the Poor ought not to be imploy'd on any of our own Staple Manufactures that are now in a flouriſhing Condition, becauſe that will only change the Hands and not increaſe the Trade, and thereby advance the Beggars, to beggar the preſent induſtrious Workmen.

V. That the Poor ought not to be imploy'd in their reſpective Pariſhes, but at ſome convenient Places near the Sea, and in the moſt plentiful Parts of the Country, that thereby they may be furniſh'd with Proviſions at the eaſier Rates.

VI. That all the Encouragement in the World ought to be given to the Iriſh to raiſe Flax, becauſe thereby it may in ſome meaſure divert their Breeding and Fatting of Cattle, the ſame Land being proper for both.

VII. That the Truſtees for the Poor ought to be accountable to Parliament, that thereby the preſent Rates may be leſſen'd or augmented as ſhall appear neceſſary.

The Benefits hereby accruing will be,

THE Poor will be relieved from the many Preſſures they now groan under, and the Nation freed from the Scandal.

And it will undoubtedly eſtabliſh the Manufactures of Linnen, Lace, Tape, Thred, *&c.* foraſmuch as the Mony rais'd for the Maintainance of the Poor will enable them to work cheaper than any of our Neighbours; By which means great part of the Commodities from *Spain* and their *Weſt-Indies*, and likewiſe from our Plantations, as *Barbadoes*, *Virginia*, *Jamaica*, *New-England*, *New-found-land*, *Maryland*, *Carolina*, *Nevis*, *Antego*, and ſeveral other Parts beyond the Seas, to which ſuch great Quantities of Linnen, *&c.* are yearly exported, will be the Proceed of the Labour of the preſent Idle Vagrants and Beggars, beſides the Conſumption within our ſelves, for all which ſuch vaſt ſums of Mony (in time of Peace are ſent to *France*, and) at preſent to our other Neighbours, towards the Employing their Poor and ſtarving our own.

All which is humbly ſubmitted to the Conſideration of this Auguſt Aſſembly, by

Direy Kent.

PROPOSALS

For ſetting the

Poor to Work.